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Transportation Division

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TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

The Transportation Division promotes the exchange of knowledge and information in transportation, both in general or in one of its many subdivisions including air, highway, rail, and water transport, and multimodal transportation.

FROM THE CHAIR

For my first column, I would like to share with you some reflections on being the Division Chair, the Association as I see it, the recently concluded annual meeting and the Transportation Division at large.

I'll be honest. The immensity of being the Chair did not sink in until the Chicago Winter Meeting. I not only was surprised by the complexity and confusion of dealing with the proposed changes to the bylaws, but also had to contend with conference-planning boot camp. On the positive side, I was finally meeting other librarians who, like me, were a little shell-shocked and trying to make heads or tails out of the whole situation. It took me a few months to realize that something very positive came out of the Chicago meeting: I can attest firsthand that SLA membership representatives—chairs, incoming chairs, etc.—can mobilize and have their (very) strong voices be heard by our executive board and headquarters staff.



After the Chicago fiasco, I was thoroughly disappointed in our leadership. (At the meeting, it was clear that some radical changes to the bylaws, such as having the elected board members choose the association president and other officers, were not the sort of changes most members wish to see.) However, like the good special librarians that they are, they redeemed themselves by correcting their mistakes, adopting new communication channels and deeply revising the proposed guidelines document that, in my opinion, would have had a difficult time being accepted in its original form. The revised proposed guidelines, again modified and now non-controversial, but still extremely important, were completed at the Los Angeles conference and will go to the membership for a vote this fall. This election will affect the future of our association so I urge all of us to read and discuss this document and make sure you vote.

The recently concluded annual meeting was a totally different and rewarding experience for me. Between being a

ROBERTO SARMIENTO

presenter at a couple of programs, attending official and unofficial Division activities, New York conference planning meetings, sessions, visiting the exhibit hall and talking to vendors and a couple of parties, I can honestly say I was glad to come home. In many ways L.A. was an odd conference, but the thin crowds at the exhibit hall, the cancellation of sessions and sponsorships and the lack of really neat freebies drove the point hard: our association and business are going through very difficult times.

On the positive side, as always, reconnecting with old friends and taking the time to make new ones is one of the main reasons I attend the annual meeting. In fact, big kudos to the Division Open House Planning Committee for organizing such a blast and facilitating an atmosphere where old and new Division members felt at home.

Another interesting thing about the Conference was the Canadians! I live in a large metropolitan/cosmopolitan area and hardly ever get to meet any. But come SLA, no matter what city it is held in, I find myself running into Canadian librarians who are having such a good time, it is impossible not to be infected by their joyfulness and end up having a great time with them.

But seriously, one of the most touching aspects of the meeting was to experience the willingness of new and "lapsed" members to answer the call to volunteer and give something back to the Division. I am touched by their willingness to serve.

Reviewing a partial SLA membership report, I can say that although we have experienced a slight decline in recent years, we are much stronger than other larger divisions. In fact, some divisions have experienced horrific declines in the last year alone. What is the reason for this? I do not know and it is probably quite complex. However, my unscientific guess will be that our smallish size, friendliness, openness and the way we keep in touch may have something to do with our strength.

We have about 208 registered SLA members, but more than 220 electronic discussion list subscribers. Not all the members are subscribers and not all subscribers are mem-

bers, but an interesting trend is that about a quarter of the subscribers are from outside the United States and most of them are not division members. This is one area of potential membership growth and I commend SLA for proposing the creation of a virtual association membership for librarians outside the United States. Although not perfect, this proposal is a step in the right direction. Our division benefits from its international members as they do from us, and I feel that in the end SLA also benefits.

Finally, what's the story with the title "Division Chair"? I have felt a little uneasy about it and now I know why. "Chair" makes it sound as if I was sitting by myself, isolated at the head of the table, when I really feel more like a sofa or a divan, even a lawn chair by the beach. Why? Because I feel that, you, the Transportation Division members, are sitting right there with me, helping me every step of the way. For this, I want to thank you.

Saludos, Roberto

Kaleidoscope: News of Transportation Members

Rita Evans, Editor

Laura Whayne, Kentucky Transportation Center Library, will be working 3/4 time with the National Transportation Library for six months to evaluate their reference service and make recommendations. The work will probably begin late in August. Laura will be based in Kentucky, but will make visits to the NTL and other libraries as needed.

Just a note to let people know that the Nebraska Department of Roads Library now has its catalog available on the server. To access it, go to <http://www.dor.state.ne.us>. Click on "NDOR Library on Line" at the upper left corner and it will take you to the search page. There are now almost 18,000 titles in the catalog. If anyone needs anything from this library, please contact **Don Robertson**, Librarian, Nebraska Dept. of Roads, 402-479-4316, fax 402-479-3989, droberts@dor.state.ne.us.

Joyce W. Koeneman (joyce.koeneman@bts.gov) reports that the National Transportation Library is in the process of publishing the Transportation Division's *Sources of Information in Transportation* bibliographies, edited by Susan Dresley. The first one is now available on the Web at <http://www.ntl.bts.gov/ref/biblio/index.htm> and the others are in the process of having links and formatting adjusted for html publication. Print copies will be available from the BTS publications order site as they are completed.

Catherine Cortelyou of the University of California, Berkeley, reports, "Last October I moved from the Institute of Transportation

Studies Library to the ITS Technology Transfer Program (TTP). It's my first new job in over 25 years, except that it isn't entirely new: the ITS Library has provided ILL and reference service for TTP clientele for many years, so my move to the TTP offices is a natural. The TTP incorporates California's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) and functions much like a university extension service—we provide short courses, conferences, local traffic safety evaluations, 'circuit-riding' Field Engineers and other information services to transportation professionals throughout the state, with particular focus on serving local public agencies and Caltrans. It's a dynamic program and growing rapidly, and consequently my job description is an exciting work-in-progress.

"I've moved from the real to the virtual library world—after all, the wonderful ITS Library is close at hand. Although I'm responsible for developing a collection of about 400 training videos used in the LTAP program, my primary task is to develop and maintain the TTP Web site as an information-rich clearinghouse for our local agencies. This summer we're also redesigning the site's look and information architecture. Other aspects of my new job include a growing editorial role in the TTP quarterly newsletter, *Tech Transfer*, and research in support of course development. What's next? I'll be playing kazoo at the National LTAP meeting in late July (don't ask). Is this a great job or what?"

Catherine's new phone number is 510-231-5646, fax 510-231-9402; e-mail is the same, ccortely@library.berkeley.edu.

I'm the reference librarian at the University of California, Berkeley's Institute of Transportation Studies' library, where I've been since August 2001, providing reference and bibliographic instruction, and indexing for TRIS.

Before arriving at UC, I was a contract taxonomist, applying library skills to intranets, portals and an internet auction site. I was an information manager at Dolby Laboratories, providing research and current awareness services in electronics and the entertainment industry. At Westinghouse, I was a senior information specialist at a division carrying out a contract for naval engineering services. I began my library career at Gulf Oil's headquarters in Pittsburgh.

While new to this division, I've been active in other SLA units, especially the San Francisco Bay Region Chapter. I was one of the founders of the Solo Librarians Caucus.

I've been so impressed with the friendliness, helpfulness and knowledge of my new colleagues in this division, and I encourage all of you to share that knowledge by contributing to the bulletin and keeping it an effective communication channel for the Division. I look forward to working with you during the next year!

- Rita Evans

**SLA Transportation Division
Business Meeting
Los Angeles, California
June 11, 2002
Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was brought to order at 12 noon by Mary Ellen Tucker, Division Chair.

Mary Ellen introduced the sponsors who were present: Will Farnam, of ASCE, the sponsoring organization for the luncheon; and Chris Pringle from Jane's, Inc. She also introduced Karen Kreizman Reczek, of the SLA Board of Directors, who was serving as the Board proctor for the Division's Business meeting.

Betty Lou Hicks had distributed copies of the Secretary's minutes of the previous Division Business meeting and the Treasurer's report. Following a motion by Zachary Ellis, the minutes were approved. The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Committee Reports

Mary Ann Ward, Chair of Nominations, presented only one candidate for the office of Chair Elect. Shaun Moran of Transport Canada was nominated and elected by the members in attendance as the new Division Chair Elect.

Betty Lou Hicks will continue her two-year term as Secretary/Treasurer.

Mary Ellen read summaries of other committee reports.

Dot Finn, Chair of Fund Raising, could not be in attendance. Mary Ellen thanked the committee for a fine job of securing sponsors for the conference programs. The committee members were Dot Finn, Marie Knup, Jim Olivetti, Jean Thomson, Sandy Tucker, and Hank Zalatel.

Membership Chair Janet Bix was not present. She had sent a report noting that the division's membership was still around 200 members. Some members had been deactivated during the past year, but several new members had joined the Division. Sadly, two members of the Division passed away during the previous year. There were several new members in attendance at the meeting, and Mary Ellen had them stand and be recognized.

Networking Chair Shaun Moran reported that the number of subscribers to the TRANLIB discussion list has increased from 161 to 176, which is about a 9 per cent increase.

The International Committee had a productive year and was to present a program in the afternoon entitled, "New Developments in the International Transportation Information Network." The session was to be moderated by Committee Chair Lynn Matis.

Laura Wayne assumed the responsibilities for compiling and preparing Division news for publication this past year. The *Transportation Division Bulletin* has ceased to exist as a separate publication, and became part of the *Sci-Tech News*. The Transportation Division news began its publication as a part of *Sci-Tech News* with the August, 2001 edition.

Beth Schwartz, Chair of the Public Relations Committee is moving forward with the development and updating of the Division's web site.

The Special Projects Committee was chaired by Susan Dresley. The committee has compiled several chapters of the fifth edition of the reference, *Sources of Information in Transportation*. This electronic publication is prepared by Transportation Division members. It will be published electronically by the U.S. Department of Transportation, and made available on the BTS web site. This committee also worked on the *Directory of Transportation Libraries*.

Earlier this year, The Division's Professional Achievement Award was presented to Jeanne Thomas, retired librarian from Michigan Department of Transportation, for a the distinguished professional career and many long years of service to the Division. The award was presented to Jeanne at the January TRB meeting.

Eulogies – The two long-time members of the Division who had died during the past year were honored by the reading of eulogies. Mary Ellen read a eulogy composed by Bonnie Osif for Judy Gutshall, who had been Librarian for the Knowledge Center of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Roberto Sarmiento read a eulogy composed by Janice Bain-Kerr for Clara Smith, who was Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation Library. Then a moment of silence was observed.

Report from the Chair - Mary Ellen reported that all the committee chairs had done their work well, and thus contributed to the ongoing success of the Division. She offered special thanks to several members. Laura Wayne served as a mentor to Mary Ellen, she coordinated the

Division news during its transition, and she updated, compiled, and organized the many revisions that had previously been made to the Division's by-laws. Bonnie Osif, editor of *Sci-Tech News* and a member of the division, was cited for her work in the smooth transition of Division news into its new home. Michael Kleiber served as the Division's local liaison for the conference. Matthew Barrett, the newly appointed Director of the Dorothy Patton Gray Transportation Library of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, was the gracious host for the Division-sponsored tour of their library and archives on Monday afternoon. Finally, Mary Ellen expressed her gratitude to everyone present at the business meeting and to all Division members, for their contributions to the work of the Division. She gave her appreciation for the opportunity to serve them over the previous year.

Mary Ellen then introduced the incoming Division Chair, Roberto Sarmiento.

New Business

There were three items of new business.

Association By-Laws - Roberto urged everyone to read about and vote on the new association by-laws.

Memorial Scholarship Fund - Janice Bain-Kerr had written a recommendation which was read by Laura Whayne. In it, she proposed to establish a memorial scholarship fund on behalf of the deceased members of the Division. This recommendation was to be further discussed at the Division's Board Meeting.

Historic Transportation Materials Committee - Barbara Post described a proposal that originated from Damian Kulash, Director of the Eno Foundation. The Transportation Research Board Library and libraries that are part of other transportation organizations often get requests to accept gift materials from libraries or retiring individuals who no longer want their personal collections of books and historical documents. These materials sometimes have great historical value. Since neither TRB nor the National Transportation Library can accept, nor do they need many of these materials, she would like to see a Historic Transportation Materials Committee established as a part of the SLA Transportation Division. This committee would examine how best to help funnel these materials to the appropriate facilities. Perhaps notice of the availability of the materials could even be posted on the Division's web site. The newly formed Historic Transportation Materials Committee, whose members include Michael Kleiber, Joyce Koeneman, and Linda Cullen, Acting Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation Library, will work with Barbara Post to establish a clearing house for this type of material.

The annual Executive Board Meeting for the Transportation Division was to be held at 7 A.M. on Wednesday, June 12 in the Westin Bonaventure Hotel. A continental breakfast was to be served. All members were invited to attend.

There being no old business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Barbara Post.

Respectfully submitted by,
Betty Lou Hicks
Secretary

**Transportation Division
Professional Achievement Award
Call for Nominations**

This award shall be given to a past or present member of the Division on the basis of outstanding contributions and/or service to the Transportation Division. This contribution and/or service may take the form of contributions to library and transportation literature or bibliography, to the work and effectiveness of Special Libraries Association and the Transportation Division, or to the transportation field through organizational work or publication. The Award is not made posthumously. The purpose of the Award is to honor those who have rendered distinguished service or have made a significant contribution to transportation libraries and librarianship.

Nominations must be received by January 1, 2003.

Presentation of the Award will be made at the Annual Business Meeting of the Transportation Division. The Executive Board of the Division is the judging committee for this Award.

Date:

Nominee Name: _____

Nominee Address: _____

Nominee Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Contribution or Service. Use additional space or pages, if needed:

NAME OF THE NOMINATOR: _____

ADDRESS OF NOMINATOR: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Send nominations by mail, fax, or e-mail to the Division Chair, Roberto Sarmiento, Northwestern University, Transportation Library, 1935 Sheridan Rd, Evanston, IL 60208, email: r-sarmiento@northwestern.edu.